

IMPORTANT FROM WASHINGTON.

Call for Half a Million of Men.

THE PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION.

Consolidation of the Last Two Calls for Troops.

The Draft to Take Place on the 10th of March.

WAR GAZETTE.

OFFICIAL.

The President's Order for a Draft on the Tenth of March.

EXECUTIVE MANDATE.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 1, 1864.

Ordered, that a draft for five hundred thousand men, to serve for three years or during the war, be made on the Tenth day of March next for the military service of the United States, crediting and deducting therefrom so many as may have been enlisted or drafted into the service prior to the first day of March, and no heretofore credited.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Explanation of the President's Order.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31, 1864.

There is much excitement here to-night in consequence of the President's order for a draft of five hundred thousand men on the 10th of March, the general impression being that it is a call for that number in addition to previous drafts. Such is not the case, and it is really but a consolidation of the two previous calls into one draft, on which enlistments previous to March 1 are to be credited. In this way all questions in regard to the filling of former quotas will be avoided, and the number of men required to finish the war be promptly obtained. Those States whose quotas have been filled on the two previous calls will not be affected by this last order.

It will be recollected that in October a call for three hundred thousand men was made. This number has been about half filled by volunteering and re-enlistments. The call now made for five hundred thousand men is to include the above three hundred thousand, being, in effect, an additional call for two hundred thousand men. The volunteering is supposed to furnish at present an average of two thousand men per day. The order of the President makes a credit or deduction of so many as may have enlisted or been drafted prior to the 1st of March, at which time the \$400 premium expires. When these arrangements are completed the total in the army will be a million of men.

GENERAL NEWS.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31, 1864.

For convenience in the payment of the army, the one year five per cent interest bearing notes are to be printed without coupons. The two year notes will have coupons attached, and will be used in the redemption of certificates of indebtedness and the payment of other public dues. It is estimated that the large amount of these notes to be put in circulation, together with the rapidly increasing National Bank currency, will stimulate conversion into the ten forty-five per cent bonds when issued, and it is not believed that, meanwhile, prices will be seriously inflated by these additions to the currency. The Secretary of the Treasury has decided not to issue any long bonds bearing more than five per cent interest. The law of 1861, authorizing the issue of six per cent two year notes, empowered the Secretary of the Treasury to reduce in lieu thereof greenbacks for all notes purchased or redeemed before maturity. It is understood that about sixty millions were redeemed or received for coupons before maturity, and on account of the great scarcity of five and ten dollar notes for the payment of the army, orders have been given to the National Bank Note Company to print this amount of notes of these denominations for the use of paymasters.

THE WIRELESS TAX. The hotels here are annoyed with the suddenness under Federal law's amendment to the wireless tax in the House. The members of the Senate Finance Committee are being day and night with remonstrances and applications for the removal of the tax on stock and bonds. The Secretary of the Treasury, however, has not yielded to the importunities of the speculators, who have failed to realize their golden expectations. He must have revenue, and will not consent to give up the prospect of large receipts from this tax until some way is shown to obtain a sufficient amount from other sources. The Finance Committee also remains unmoved, and although said to be divided in opinion, will make no recommendations to the matter. A reverse to the wishes of the Secretary. The opinion prevails among those in both Houses best informed on the subject, that the efforts of the speculators who have been so successful in this camp will be unavailing.

GENERAL BUREAUS AND THE OHIO LEGISLATURE. The Ohio Legislature, declaring unabated confidence in General Rosecrans, is regarded here as an expression of confidence of the treatment of that officer by the President. The efforts of the speculators who have been so successful in this camp will be unavailing.

THE CASE OF SENATOR RAIL. Secretary Stanton, before the High Investigating Committee yesterday, said, among other things, that Senator Rail asked nothing of him in relation to the release of Hunt from the Ohio capital which a counselor at law might not with perfect propriety have asked of a Judge, and that he yielded nothing to the application of Mr. Rail that he would not have yielded to any respectable counselor, and that he considered himself as acting judicially in the matter.

SPREAD OF THE SUBWOOFER. The United States gunboat Retlaw, without her armament, averaged eighteen and three-quarter miles yesterday.

INDIAN DELIBERATIONS IN TOWN. There are at present delegations from three tribes of Kansas Indians in this city, representing the Miami,

Shawnee, and Muskogee, or Christian Indians. The two former are negotiating with Commissioner Dole for the removal of their tribes from Kansas and the surrender of their present reservations. The Muskogee desire to be recognized as citizens, having become fully civilized, and having adopted the dress and costume of the whites, and determined to abandon their ancient customs and savage modes of life.

The Internal Tax Law.

INTERESTING DECISION CONCERNING WHOLESALE DEALERS.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15, 1864.

See in reply to yours of the 5th instant, I have to say that under the provisions of the first section of the act of March 3, 1863, when a license has been issued to a wholesale dealer at a rate which is afterwards discovered to be insufficient to cover the amount of his annual sales, an assessment should be made in the next monthly list to cover the deficiency; and upon the payment of the tax thus assessed, the collector will endorse the receipt upon the face of the license already issued. When this is done, the license will have all the effect of a license originally issued at the full rate. For example: if a wholesale dealer takes a license from the 1st of May upon the basis of annual sales exceeding \$100,000, and it is afterwards ascertained that his annual sales will exceed the amount named, he should be assessed for a tax of \$100 in addition, unless it is anticipated that his annual sales will reach such an amount as to subject him to a higher tax. Upon the payment of the \$100 thus assessed the collector will endorse the receipt upon the face of the license, and it will then authorize the transaction of business at a rate not exceeding \$100,000 per annum. If any person, having taken out a license at an insufficient rate, fails to notify the assessor as soon as he discovers that such is the fact, or fails to pay the amount due as soon as it is assessed, he will be liable to all the penalties provided for doing business without a license. In case of an assessment in this manner for a deficiency it is not necessary that an application should be made as in the case of a license originally issued. Very respectfully,
CHARLES T. LEWIS, for Commissioner.

To PIERCE C. VAN WYCK, Esq., Assessor Internal Revenue.

Military Affairs.

SHARP TREATMENT OF ANOTHER VETERAN REGIMENT—HOW THIS SIXTY-NINTH NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS WERE RECEIVED IN THIS CITY.

In the fall of 1861 the Sixty-ninth New York Volunteer, numbering about nine hundred men, and mostly recruited in this city, left here for Alexandria, Va. It was attached to the Army of the Potomac, and has been identified with its fortunes ever since, being attached to the First division, Second army corps. It has fought in the following battles, some of which have been the most desperate of the war—Fair Oaks, Peach Orchard, White Oak Swamp, Savage Station, Charles City Cross Roads, Malvern Hill, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Brimston Station and Mine Run, besides numerous small skirmishes. The fragment left of the regiment having re-enlisted, were ordered to New York on a furlough of thirty days to recruit, and to favor some one who has an interest in the route, were sent by the way of Harrisburg, being three days and four nights on the way, exposed in cold cars to the terrible cold weather, which at that time (December 29 to January 2) was the coldest of the winter, when by the regular route it takes about sixteen hours to make the journey.

On their arrival here, the small band of brave men, now reduced to sixty-two muskets and about eight officers, found no friends to welcome them but their Colonel (who arrived on day or two before) and walked up that Broadway in silence, which they had left over two years before with high hopes and full ranks. On the 5th, having been disappointed in having a reception accorded them, the Colonel ordered a parade, and these few war veterans, now almost bullet proof, marched proudly through Broadway, preceded only by a couple of their own drummers, and bearing in their midst three rebel battle flags, being but half the number captured by them (the colors being in Washington, at the War Office). After such service and losses as the regiment has undergone, the New York authorities ought to blush to allow them to return in such a manner.

THE NEW SIXTY-NINTH (PRIGER) REGIMENT.

The above regiment, formerly known as the First regiment, Federal Brigade, has been incorporated into the Sixty-ninth, New York State National Guard, under the able command of Colonel John O'Mahony, the Irish nationalist. The following general and special orders have been issued in reference to the regiment—

SPECIAL ORDERS—No. 3.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, STATE OF NEW YORK, ANTHONY BARNARD, Adjutant General.

The following companies of infantry are hereby organized and attached to the Sixty-ninth regiment, First Brigade, First division, National Guard of the State of New York.

Company A—Captain John P. McCabe, First Lieutenant William H. Connelley, Second Lieutenant James H. Kennedy.

Company B—Captain John A. O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company C—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company D—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company E—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company F—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company G—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company H—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company I—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company K—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company L—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company M—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company N—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company O—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company P—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company Q—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company R—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company S—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company T—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company U—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company V—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company W—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company X—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company Y—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company Z—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AA—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AB—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AC—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AD—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AE—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AF—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AG—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AH—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AI—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

Company AJ—Captain John O'Brien, First Lieutenant Bartholomew O'Leary, Second Lieutenant John O'Mahony.

THE FIGHTING IN WESTERN VIRGINIA.

Scene of the Recent Contest in Gen. Kelley's Department.



EAST TENNESSEE.

Development of the Recent Movements of Longstreet's Army.

Counter Movements of the Unionists.

Rebel Demonstration at Strawberry Plains.

Capture of a Rebel Courier with Despatches.

Hasty Retreat of Longstreet's Forces.

Mr. James C. Fitzpatrick's Despatches.

THE MOVEMENT OF LONGSTREET'S ARMY.

has now developed itself, and a great deal of the excitement which pervaded Knoxville two days since has been away. A reconnaissance made last Saturday and Sunday discovered that Longstreet had made a hasty retreat and gone beyond Dandridge.

On Monday or Tuesday last he threw a pontoon bridge over the river at Dandridge, and by this time the greater portion of his force is on the lower side, and within two days' easy march of Knoxville. The rebel valley thus placed in his possession is the only one left in this section of the State which has not been drained of supplies. It has been the principal source of subsistence for our own army, and was equally necessary to the rebels. Their occupying of it was essential about their position the campaign against Knoxville and go into winter quarters in the interim. It is, therefore, a ground of dispute to both armies, and will compel offensive operations on our part.

CHARGE OF FRONT OF THE UNION ARMY. The entire movement has necessitated a corresponding movement on the part of our army, which has now changed front on what was formerly its right flank. It is now in line parallel with the Tennessee valley, which is a couple of the main valley of the State, leaving its own position, in case of disaster, to fall back through the Smoky Mountains to North Carolina. There are some, indeed, who think that, despairing of the capture of Knoxville, he is moving along the southeast edge of the State, hugging the mountains as he goes, with the intention of regaining the army of Johnston in Georgia.

is once more enveloped with the strain of music, as brigade after brigade files through the streets and pours over the pontoon bridge to the south side of the river. Such, we believe, is the whole movement in a retreat, because they see troops going through the city and a

MEADE'S ARMY.

Mr. Wm. Young's Despatch.

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, Jan. 30, 1864.

ANNIVERSARY BALL OF THE SIXTY-NINTH NEW YORK STATE NATIONAL GUARD. The ball last evening at Fairfax Station was given by the non-commissioned officers of the Sixty-ninth New York State National Guard, in honor of the first anniversary of the battle of the Deserted House, near the Black water, when the rebel General Fry was repulsed and defeated.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

THE SUPPER AND RECEPTION. The supper was most creditable to the caterers, and a painting of the Deserted House was conspicuously hung on the rear wall of the building.

THE MUSIC AND DANCING. The band of the Sixty-ninth played the waltzes, quadrilles, polkas and redoways, to which the happy soldiers and the happier ladies danced. About twenty-five ladies were in attendance on this festive occasion, and all the officers of the Sixty-ninth, as invited guests.

GENERAL KELLEY'S DEPARTMENT.

Sharp Contest in the Vicinity of Williamsport, Hardy County, Va.

CAPTURE OF A UNION ARMY TRAIN.

PREPARATIONS TO MEET THE REBELS.

Severe Fighting Expected Within a Few Days.

THE LOSSES ON BOTH SIDES.

Withdrawal of Our Troops from Petersburg.

Mr. T. C. Wilson's Despatch.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT WESTERN VIRGINIA, Jan. 31, 1864.

Again we are in the midst of excitement and activity, caused by a severe conflict that took place yesterday afternoon in the neighborhood of Williamsport, Hardy county, and which lasted, with considerable persistence and severity, for four hours.

On Thursday night a train of about eighty wagons was sent out from New Creek, heavily laden with commissary stores for the garrison at Petersburg, and accompanying the train was an escort of about eight hundred men, being detachments from the Twenty-third Illinois (Irish Brigade), Fourth Virginia cavalry, Second Maryland, First and Fourth Virginia infantry, and one hundred of the Ringgold cavalry battalion, the whole under command of Colonel J. W. Snyder.

Nothing unusual occurred until the train got about three miles south of Williamsport, when it was suddenly cut up at different points by open and concealed forces of the enemy.

Although somewhat surprised by the suddenness of the attack, the guard at once formed and deployed for action. Then it was that a hard fight ensued, commencing at three o'clock in the afternoon and lasting for over four hours, at the expiration of which time it was found that we had about eighty killed and wounded, rank and file. The enemy's loss was said to be about one hundred.

In the early part of the fight the rebels opened fire from four pieces of artillery. The superiority of the enemy's strength—there being in all about two thousand men—also gave them the advantage in outflanking movements, and the enemy exercised his ingenuity simultaneously to operate on the front, rear and flanks of Colonel Snyder's command.

The enemy, however, completely failed in his object, which seemed to be to surround and, if possible, capture the whole party. Several times the rebel lines were broken, and several times the rebel charges were repulsed.

At last, at night closed, the superior numbers of the rebels, and not their good fighting qualities, gained them a success. Our men were exhausted with marching, countermarching and operating in various ways that it was as much as they could do to successfully defend themselves, let alone make further efforts to retake the train.

At one time the train was in a fair way of being entirely saved; but, owing to the excellent skulking properties of some few of the teamsters and the effect of their conduct on others, a kind of panic was the result. A portion of the train was saved notwithstanding the above-mentioned misfortune.

On hearing of the engagement Colonel Mulligan at once sent reinforcements to Colonel Snyder.

Colonel Mulligan received information from Colonel Thoburn that the post at Petersburg was again being threatened, and that General Early was reported to have moved in force on Wednesday last from the neighborhood of Harrisonburg.

The rebel Generals Rosecrans and Gilmore are said to be again in the saddle. General Imboden is also moving.

What General Kelley is doing to counteract the enemy's movement will develop itself before long. There will either be a severe fight or the enemy must retire in haste.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT WESTERN VIRGINIA, Jan. 31—P. M.

The command of Colonel Thoburn, which comprised the garrison at Petersburg, is now all safe. Late last night he evacuated the position in consequence of receiving information that the enemy would positively attack his works in heavy force at daylight this morning.

Colonel Thoburn's success in getting safely off with his men, trains, guns, ammunition stores, &c., is looked upon as quite a feat. While he was moving and preparing to make the attack, he took a mountain road, passed between two columns of the enemy, and is now in a safe and desirable position again.

General Early has been defeated for the morning, by his orders. Petersburg was attacked. The enemy cautiously approached the place